

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2002

Present: Ald. Samuelson, Roy LaMotte (Traffic Engineer) Sgt. Norcross (Police)
Juris Alksnitis (Planning) Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Also Present: Ald. Lipsitt, Johnson, Merrill

#162-02 ALD. JOHNSON & LIPSITT requesting additional metered parking
abutting Newtonville post office. (Ward 2)

ACTION: APPROVED 3-0 (Ald. Samuelson not voting)

NOTE: President Lipsitt and Ald. Johnson were both present for discussion of this item. Ald. Lipsitt reported to the Committee that spaces in front of the Newtonville Post Office are highly utilized. There are presently three parking spaces in front of the post office, two in front of an adjacent gasoline station and several preceding it farther east on Washington Street. The three spaces in front of the post office are always busy and inevitably a fourth car parks behind the third space when all the spaces are occupied and parks too close to the corner. In addition to parking illegally and risking getting a ticket, often motorists do not put any money in the city meters. President Lipsitt thought the spaces were initially laid out that way when the post office set up their drive-in mailboxes. These have all been redesigned so motorists must now get out of their car in order to use them with the result that there is no longer any use for several car lanes where you can't park. President Lipsitt voiced her opinion that the number of spaces should be increased to at least four, five or six and meter them.

Mr. LaMotte explained to the Council that this area was researched with results showing a number of ordinances that over-lapped. Mr. LaMotte agreed with President Lipsitt's suggestion for more parking. Ald. Johnson suggested that a postal box located near the Lowell Avenue intersection should be located to a more convenient spot. A new draft ordinance to increase parking is included in the packet.

#139-02 MARY F. TRAPHAGEN, 54 Cummings Road requesting reduction in the posted speed limit on CUMMINGS ROAD, Newton Centre. (Ward 6).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Request to state for speed reduction)

NOTE: The petitioner, Mary Traphagen, was present and explained that in April a speed limit sign (30 mph) was posted on Cummings Road. There are about sixteen young children on the street and the street has no sidewalks. Ms. Traphagen said North Street residents use Cummings Road as a short cut. A number of other residents testified in support of this petition.

Mr. LaMotte explained that speed reduction requests within the City of Newton are not controlled solely within local jurisdiction. There is a joint review by the Mass. Highway Department and the Registry. The local community prepares an engineering study that is forwarded first to the District 4 Office of Mass Highway and a recommendation is then made to their Boston office. A speed study was done showing that the 85th percentile was travelling approximately 24 mph. The Traffic Engineer did note that there is a lack of warning signage on the street. A three-year accident report shows there were zero reportable accidents on Cummings Road. The prima facie speed on this residential roadway is 30 mph with most of the cars on the street travelling within the speed limits. Site distance is adequate and parking is allowed on both sides of the street. He further explained that a recommendation to lower the speed limit could be sent to the state but the possibility of approval would not be high. In the short-term Mr. LaMotte suggested more warning signage and that the speed study be submitted to the state with the request to lower the speed limit.

#160-02 CITY TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting stop sign at Mount Alvernia Road @Commonwealth Avenue (north drive). (Ward 7)

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Mr. LaMotte explained this was Phase 3 of the Commonwealth Avenue Master Plan. There have been discussions with the state for an additional stop sign where the carriage road crosses Mt. Alvernia Road. This intersection is busy when school is in session. The Police Department records showed that there have been no reportable accidents in the last three years. Mr. LaMotte would like the sign on the carriage road only. The Committee voted to approve the item 4-0.

#257-01 TERESA SAURO, 50 Cook Street, requesting two-hour parking limit (7am to 7pm; except Saturday, Sunday & Holidays) on the East Side of COOK STREET, Nonantum. (Ward 1)(07-19-01)

ACTION: HELD 4-0

NOTE: Teresa Sauro was present as well as many residents of the street. Advanced Auto of Cook Street seems to be the cause of the parking problems. Ms. Sauro had taken license numbers of five employees that she noted were parking from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Ald. Merrill had visited the site and agrees there are problems with Advanced Auto employees using the street for parking. He suggested to the residents present that they call the police when they feel there is an enforcement issue. Frank Mercuri, the attorney for the owner of 14 Cook Street spoke in opposition to the request for two-hour parking. He explained they do not have any off-street parking and there are a number of other houses in the same situation. Attorney Mercuri presented a petition in opposition signed by sixteen residents of Cook Street respectfully requesting denial of this parking limit. Ald. Samuelson suggested trying to work with Advanced Auto. Mr. LaMotte felt it would be advisable to hold this item and comments would be forwarded regarding Advanced Auto to the Inspectional Services Department. The Committee voted 4-0 to hold.

#84-02 MARY MCCARTHY ET AL, 99 Florence Street, (The Farm) Chestnut Hill 02467 requesting that parking be restricted to the North side only of Florence Street, along the entire length of the street. Ward 8

ACTION: NAN 4-0

NOTE: Mr. LaMotte said during the last discussion there were questions regarding truck delivery to the Atrium causing parking problems. Since the last meeting, there have been discussions with the Atrium management regarding coordinating the delivery schedule. Mr. LaMotte asked the residents of Florence Street that were present if there had been any improvement. Residents present stated there was some minor improvement but problems still exist with parking on the north side. Ald. Samuelson identified as problematic the fact that there are no improvements to the roadway, no curbing, and no sidewalks. She said the parking should be organized and the sidewalks should be safe for everyone to use. Mr. LaMotte made a recommendation to have a letter sent to the Atrium Mall and the Capital Grill asking if they would entertain making application to the City for betterment in the form of curbs and sidewalks in the southerly part of their property. The Committee voted No Action Necessary 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosalie Myers, Council Clerk

